DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 325 282 RC 017 858

AUTHOR Luther, Vicki; Wall, Milan
TITLE 10 Ideas for Recruiting New Leaders.
INSTITUTION Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Lincoln, NE.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 15p.
AVAILABLE FROM Heartland Center for Leadership Development, 941 'O' Street, Suite 920, Lincoln, NE 68508 ($2.50).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Community Change; *Community Development; *Community Involvement; *Community Leaders; Community Resources; *Recruitment; Rural Areas; *Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS Nebraska; Small Towns

ABSTRACT

This booklet presents ideas based on actions taken by community leaders to recruit new and emerging leaders to join in the improvement of a community. The discussion includes: (1) asking the question "who's not here?" to make sure the community organization is representative; (2) looking for skills, not names to discover leadership potential and involve new people; (3) involvement by degrees thus creating a natural progression from helper to leader; (4) appealing to self-interests and matching recruiting style to the personal motivation of the new leader; (5) using a wide-angle lens to see how each contribution fits into the whole picture; (6) defining the task by explaining the importance of the task; (7) using current leaders to recruit new leaders; (8) creating a history of efficient use of people's time; (9) offering membership "premiums" and using rewards to overcome hesitation of potential leaders; and (10) marketing your wares and making sure that the community knows what's being accomplished. (ALL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Heartland Center

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

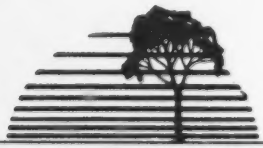
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED325282

RC017858

10 ideas for recruiting new leaders

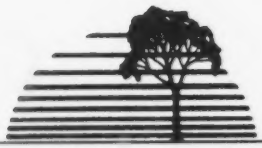
A Publication of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development



Heartland Center for Leadership Development

10 ideas for recruiting new leaders

By
Vicki Luther, Ed.D.
and Milan Wall



Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Contents

About the Ten Ideas 1
Ideas 1 - 10 2
About the Heartland Center 9
Ordering Additional Publications 10
Heartland Center Directors & Advisors ... 11

About the 10 Ideas

These ideas represent a synthesis of theory and experience. Working at community development in small towns throughout the United States has provided a source of examples and anecdotes that offer real life applications of the theories about leadership and motivation.

None of these ideas is original: all of the examples are based on the actions of community leaders dealing with the very real problem of recruiting new and emerging leaders to join in the improvement of a community.

Nor is the list by any means exhaustive, since ideas for recruiting new leaders are really only limited by personal creativity and circumstances. However, these are proven approaches to the recruitment problem and can be considered with confidence.

© 1989 Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Ask the Question: 'Who's Not Here?'

IDEA 1

In order to answer this question, members of a community group have to understand the composition of their community. What groups or individuals should be involved in order to have a truly representative community organization? Which groups are missing from the organization (or the meeting or the project)?

Understanding the make-up of the community helps in analyzing the leadership pool so that certain segments of the community can be targeted for special recruiting efforts.

This can also be considered as an 'insurance policy' for a community action project since making sure that the group is inclusive is the best way to build in cooperation from the beginning.

Answering this question assumes, of course, that efforts will be made to involve those not present, as a way of making sure that all parts of the community are well represented.

Look for Skills, Not Names

IDEA 2

One of the problems caused by relying on the same people for the same tasks over and over again is that those people will eventually tire of making the same contribution. Burnout is a phrase that is all too familiar to most community leaders *and* volunteers.

By looking at skills rather than names, you can discover leadership potential and involve new people.

A simple way to identify new people to recruit is to focus on the *skills* needed for the task, not on the person who last did it. By listing the skills required for a task and then attempting to match those needed skills with an individual's experience, it's also possible to identify a whole new group of people who can help with a community project.

It might turn out that the person with the necessary organizing skills for the community picnic is a retired farmer or an elementary school teacher who's never before been asked to help out with a project.

IDEA 3 Try Involvement by Degrees

One of the most successful techniques for helping new leaders develop is to offer ways in which individuals can become involved on a limited basis and then "grow" into a larger and more prominent role.

In fact, there often seems to be a natural progression from helper to leader.

Asking for help with a small and simple task makes it easier for an individual to respond with a yes while presenting the chance to increase the commitment as time goes by.

It's important to remember, though, that many people do need a strong push to the front to take on a leadership role. Often history and cultural influences can keep talented individuals in the background. However, gaining experience working within a group usually bolsters confidence to take on more responsibility.

Appeal to Self-Interests

IDEA 4

A standard approach to recruiting new volunteers is to try to understand the personal motivation of others. The realization that others see rewards in community service is a vital step to both identify and recruit new leaders.

Active self-interest may be intellectual or altruistic or social. Individuals may wish to help others, to pay back a debt to the community that fostered them, or to receive the approval of friends or neighbors.

> ***Match recruiting style to the personal motivation of the new leader in order to be the most persuasive.***

It is, essentially, the personal drive that brings a new leader to the point of taking a risk and trying to accomplish some task. By understanding how a person sees the rewards of community service, the appeal to take on a leadership role can be tailored to be most persuasive.

Use a Wide Angle Lens

IDEA 5

While the effort to bring new people into the leadership arena is important to community improvement projects, it's also important to recognize that even the smallest and most limited volunteer contribution can be part of the leadership activities of a community.

> ***What's important is seeing how each contribution fits into the whole picture.***

Planting flowers in a park or helping with a mass mailing may seem like small efforts, but they still are part of the whole picture of what makes up a healthy and vital community.

Recognizing and encouraging *any* and *all* contributions to community survival requires a sense of the big picture. And, by never discounting any effort, no matter how small, the door to increased involvement remains open.

IDEA 6 Define the Task

Recruiting new leaders by asking for help on a community project becomes very effective when a task is very clearly defined. This means describing the skills needed as well as the time commitment required.

> ***Explaining why a task is important and how it will make a difference is an effective way to recruit an individual into a leadership position.***

It's also a good motivational technique to describe a task in terms of what the expectations are, perhaps even including a final product. For example, if a leader is asked to manage a town hall meeting, the expectations will certainly include speaking to the assembled group and introducing others. It might also involve helping with advertising the meeting or designing the agenda. The difference in time commitment is obvious.

Finally, defining the task should also cover some ideas about how the special task fits into the whole scheme of community improvement. That understanding of how a contribution makes the whole effort stronger is an important motivational tool.

IDEA 7 Use Current Leaders to Recruit New Leaders

The most successful recruitment efforts are conducted by the people already in leadership positions. Because of their visibility alone, current leaders are in an excellent position to draw new leaders into community activity.

Current leaders are also in positions to make use of resources such as the media, public meetings, perhaps even staff or existing committee structures to recruit new leaders.

Example is perhaps the most powerful recruiting tool available to current leaders. By sharing responsibilities through delegation, current leaders can recruit and train newcomers to the leadership pool. Recognition of effort and friendly interest and encouragement go a long way to insure a good supply of leaders for any community.

One of the signs of a healthy and vital community is a leadership group that recognizes the need to recruit new members into the leadership role.

Create a History of Efficient Use of People's Time

IDEA 8

There's nothing so encouraging to a volunteer as a meeting that's well run. Since no one likes to waste time, especially volunteer time, the efficient use of time helps build a positive reputation for an organization.

Good time management includes careful follow-up practices for delegating tasks as well as meetings that are focused and productive. Short- as well as long-term goals are important too, so that some results are accomplished immediately and serve to build that reputation for productive activity.

An organizational reputation for action as well as efficiency always helps to recruit new leaders.

Group members who are convinced that the organization (or community) project is worthwhile and that the effort is well-managed are much more likely to take on a leadership role.

IDEA 9 Offer Membership 'Premiums'

What are the advantages of assuming leadership? By offering some sort of "premium" to newcomers, emerging leaders can often be persuaded to try out a new role.

The use of a reward, often an intangible or even just a symbolic gesture, can overcome hesitation on the part of the volunteer leader.

The hesitancy of potential leaders can often be overcome by using 'premiums' to enhance the leadership position.

"Premiums" can be anything from a discount on club dues, a trip to a convention or a workshop or even a letter of recognition sent to an employer highlighting the community service contributions of an employee.

IDEA 10 Market Your Wares

Making sure that the community is aware of the results of local effort is an important technique for attracting potential leaders. Service clubs and community organizations, as well as elected or appointed councils and commissions, should consider ways to let the community know what's being accomplished.

While word of mouth is, of course, a major communication path in any community, local newspapers (weekly or daily) and radio or TV stations can be used to highlight projects and plans. Newsletters and special notices take advantage of the print media too.

If a community improvement group offers an "annual report" to the community through the local media or a presentation to the city council or village board, the reputation and visibility of the group is greatly increased. That visibility makes the organization or project attractive to emerging leaders and makes recruiting potential leaders easier.

Be creative in the way your organization is presented to the community. Build on the reputation of your group as both effective and important.

Leaders of the Future

It's obvious that leadership is a continuing community issue. Recruiting new people into leadership positions and supporting the initial efforts of emerging leaders is one of the most productive strategies for survival that any community can employ.

Keeping in mind the motivation and needs of individuals goes a long way to ensuring that recruiting efforts are successful. Rewarding and recognizing effort is probably the most important theme for keeping leaders committed.

Above all, the community that works hardest to make citizen participation possible at all levels is the one that develops the most and best leaders. And that's the type of community that survives despite challenging times.

About the Heartland Center

The Heartland Center for Leadership Development is an independent, nonprofit corporation engaged in a variety of activities designed to help recognized and emerging leaders approach confidently the challenges associated with fundamental change.

The Heartland Center was organized by a group of Great Plains leaders as an outgrowth of the Visions from the Heartland, a grassroots futures project. The Center is known nationally for its innovative research on rural leadership and especially for its study on "Clues to Rural Community Survival."

Heartland Center programs include:

- Training for leaders in communities, businesses and organizations to help them deal with fundamental change by finding opportunities where others may see only threats.
- Assisting communities and organizations in developing a capacity for strategic planning and tackling problems of the future through solutions they themselves take the lead in devising.
- Helping policymakers clarify questions key to the future of communities and states and promoting broad-scale public participation in the search for workable yet innovative solutions to problems brought on by significant change.
- Conducting research on leadership and its potential impact on quality of life, public policy, and business and community prosperity.

Publications Available for Order

Please use the attached form when ordering. Pre-paid orders at the prices listed. Orders billed will include an additional $1.00 handling charge per item. Prices include applicable sales taxes. Prices subject to change without prior notice.

ORDER FORM

Indicate number of copies of each report requested.

- ☐ Clues to Rural Commmunity Survival $10.00
- ☐ Schools as Entrepreneurs: Helping Small Towns Survive $5.00
- ☐ The Entrepreneurial Community (New Edition) $21.50
- ☐ Seven Secrets to Coping With Change $2.50
- ☐ Ten Ideas for Recruiting New Leaders $2.50
- ☐ Check if you want to receive notice of new publications.
- ☐ Check if you want to receive information on Heartland Center programs and services.

Name/Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (___) _____ Amt Enclosed $ _____ Send Statement _____

DETACH AND MAIL TO:

HEARTLAND CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
941 'O' STREET, SUITE 920, LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 68508
Phone 402-474-7667 FAX 402-474-7672

Board of Directors

Martha Beaman
Assistant Director of Professional Development
Ameritas Financial Services
Lincoln, Nebraska

Peter Blood
Associate Professor of Anthropology
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska

Larry Dlugosh
Superintendent of Schools
Grand Island, Nebraska

Nette Nelson
Vice President
Nebraska Research and Development Authority
Lincoln, Nebraska

Chuck Schroeder
Vice President
University of Nebraska Foundation
Lincoln, Nebraska

Jim Seacrest
President
Western Publishing Co.
North Platte, Nebraska

National Council of Advisors

Ann Abbe
Executive Director
Alumni Association
University of Texas at Arlington
Arlington, Texas

Janet Ayres
Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana

Thomas B. Ballard
Executive Director
Institute for Public Service
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee

Diana B. Beaudoin
Dean of Freshmen
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire

Roger Beverage
Executive Vice President
Oklahoma Bankers Association
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Tony Chambers
Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
University of Missouri
St. Louis, Missouri

William Cunningham
Vice President for Academic Affairs, Creighton University
Omaha, Nebraska

Kelsey Gray
Organizational Development Specialist
Washington State University
Spokane, Washington

Anne L. Hearn
Executive Director
Community Leadership Seminars
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dwight Johnson
Assistant District Director of Business Development
Small Business Administration
Kansas City, Missouri

Donald R. McNeil
Senior Program Officer
Academy for Educational Development
Washington, D.C.

Susan Myers
Community Relations Director
North Hennepin Community College
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

Neal R. Peirce
Contributing Editor
The National Journal and
Syndicated Columnist
Washington Post Writers Group
Washington, D.C.

Sandra Scofield
State Senator
49th District
Chadron, Nebraska

Irving Spitzberg
President
The Knowledge Company
Silver Spring, Maryland

Robert Theobald
Author/Economist
Wickenburg, Arizona

Executive Staff

Milan Wall
Co-Director

Vicki Luther
Co-Director